

2. On or about December 28, 2022, in the Southern District of New York and elsewhere, ELLIOT ALLEN, the defendant, knowingly, by force and violence, and by intimidation, took and attempted to take, from the person and presence of another, and obtained

and attempted to obtain by extortion, property and money and a thing of value belonging to, and in the care, custody, control, management, and possession of a bank, as that term is defined in Title 18, United States Code, Section 2113(f), credit union, as that term is defined in Title 18, United States Code, Section 2113(g), and savings and loan association, as that term is defined in Title 18, United States Code, Section 2113(h), to wit, ALLEN took money from a bank by threatening a bank employee and causing the bank employee to turn over to ALLEN money in the bank's custody.

(Title 18, United States Code, Sections 2113(a) and 2.)

COUNT THREE
(Bank Robbery)

3. On or about May 4, 2023, in the Southern District of New York and elsewhere, ELLIOT ALLEN, the defendant, knowingly, by force and violence, and by intimidation, took and attempted to take, from the person and presence of another, and obtained and attempted to obtain by extortion, property and money and a thing of value belonging to, and in the care, custody, control, management, and possession of a bank, as that term is defined in Title 18, United States Code, Section 2113(f), credit union, as that term is defined in Title 18, United States Code, Section 2113(g), and savings and loan association, as that term is defined in Title 18, United States Code, Section 2113(h), to wit, ALLEN took money from a bank by threatening a bank employee and causing the bank employee to turn over to ALLEN money in the bank's custody.

(Title 18, United States Code, Sections 2113(a) and 2.)

The bases for my knowledge and for the foregoing charges are, in part, as follows:

4. I have been a Special Agent with the FBI for approximately five years, and I am currently a member of the FBI-NYPD Joint Bank Robbery/Violent Crime Task Force (the "Task Force"). I have been personally involved in the investigation of this matter. This affidavit is based upon my conversations with other law enforcement officers; my examination of surveillance videos, photographs, law enforcement reports, and other law enforcement records; and my involvement in this investigation. Because this affidavit is being submitted for the limited purpose of establishing probable cause, it does not include all the facts that I have learned during the course of my investigation. Where the contents of documents and the actions, statements, and conversations of others are reported herein, they are reported in substance and in part, except where otherwise indicated.

The Robbery Pattern

5. Since approximately December 2022, the Task Force has been investigating a pattern of bank robberies and attempted bank robberies in New York City, between on or about November 10, 2022, and on or about May 4, 2023 (the "Robbery Pattern").

6. I and other law enforcement officers have identified at least two robberies and one attempted robbery as being part of the Robbery Pattern. In general, the Robbery Pattern consists of the following:

a. The robber enters the bank during business hours when tellers or other employees are present;

b. The robber presents a teller with a handwritten note demanding a minimum amount of money, and at least twice including a threat to the teller and/or other bank employees;

c. The robber usually wears a hooded sweatshirt with the hood over his head and a medical facemask and/or ski mask over part or all of his face; and

d. The robber flees either after being handed cash by the teller, or after the teller disengages with the robber without handing him any cash.

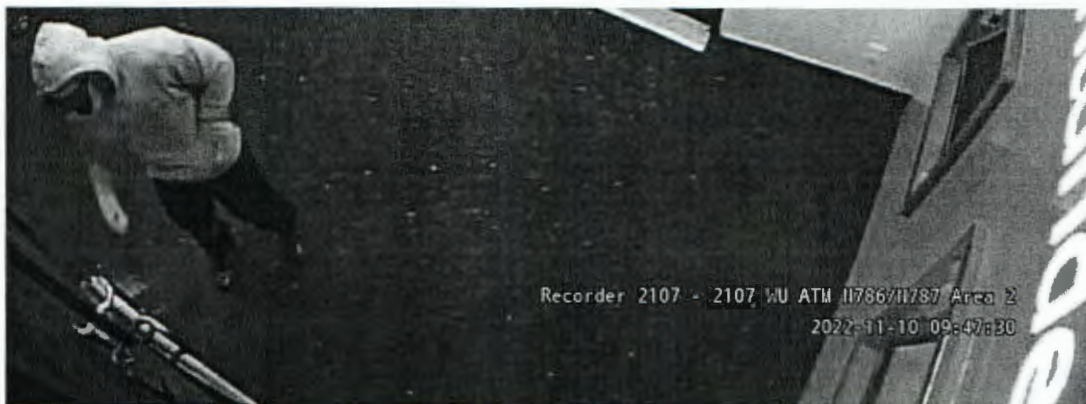
7. As described below, the robber has been identified as ELLIOT ALLEN, the defendant.

The Attempted Robbery

8. Based on my conversations with other law enforcement officers and my review of law enforcement reports, surveillance video, and photographs, I have learned the following about an attempted robbery on or about November 10, 2022 (the “Attempted Robbery”):

a. On or about November 10, 2022, at approximately 9:47 AM, a person (the “Attempted Robber”) entered a bank (“Bank-1”) branch at 1416 East Avenue, Bronx, New York (“Branch-1”) wearing a white or light gray hooded sweatshirt with a Champion logo on the left chest area and “Champion” lettering displayed on the right sleeve, and a white facemask under the sweatshirt’s raised hood. The Attempted Robber also wore dark athletic shoes with white or other light markings on them.

b. Still images of the Attempted Robber entering Branch-1, and of the Attempted Robber at the teller counter at Branch-1, were captured from Branch-1’s surveillance cameras and are shown below:



The Attempted Robber enters Branch-1 at approximately 9:47:30 AM on November 10, 2022.

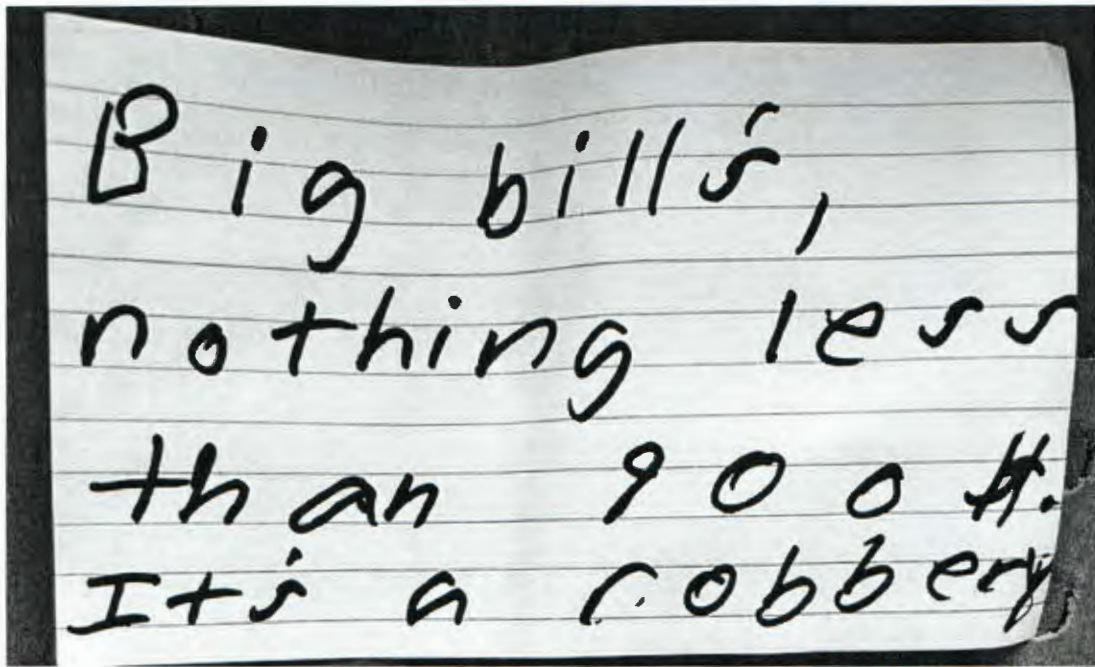


The Attempted Robber presents a note demanding cash to a Branch-1 teller at Stations 6 & 7 at approximately 9:47:49 AM.



The Attempted Robber's light-colored hooded sweatshirt bears the word "Champion" on its right sleeve and the Champion brand logo on its left chest area.

c. As shown above, the Attempted Robber approached a teller at Station 6 & 7 and displayed a pre-written note to the teller ("Note-1," and collectively with the other robbery demand notes described below in Paragraphs 9(c) through 15, the "ALLEN Robbery Notes"). Note-1 said, "Big bill's [*sic*], nothing less than 900 [*dollar sign with two vertical strokes*]. It's a robbery[.]" A photo of Note-1, which law enforcement recovered from Branch-1 after responding to Robbery-1, is below:



Note-1

d. The teller walked away with Note-1, and the Attempted Robber exited Branch-1.

Robbery-1

9. Based on my conversations with other law enforcement officers and my review of law enforcement reports, surveillance video, and photographs, I have learned the following about a robbery on or about December 28, 2022 ("Robbery-1"):

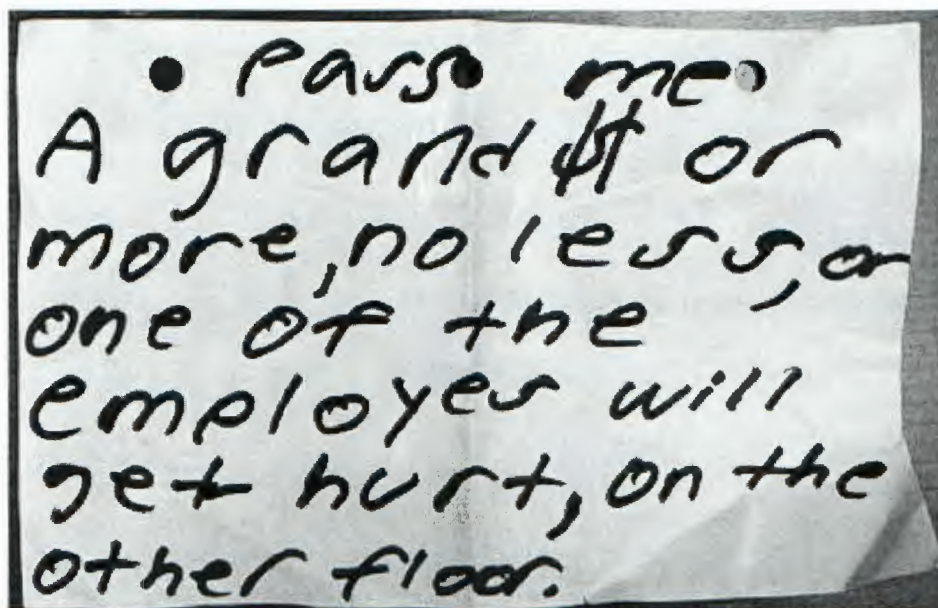
a. On or about December 28, 2022, at approximately 9:18 AM, a person ("Robber-1") entered a bank ("Bank-2") branch at 201 West 34th Street in Manhattan ("Branch-2") wearing a dark hooded sweatshirt, a medical facemask with two yellow straps, blue jeans with their hem rolled upward to appear as a lighter-colored band, and dark shoes.

b. Still images of Robber-1 entering Branch-2, and of Robber-1 approaching Teller Window 4 of Branch-2, were captured from Branch-2's surveillance cameras and are shown below:



At left, Robber-1 enters Branch-2 at approximately 9:18 AM on December 28, 2022. At right, Robber-1 approaches Teller Window 4 at Branch-2, and presents a pre-written robbery note, at approximately 9:20 AM.

c. As shown above, Robber-1 approached a teller at Window 4 and displayed a pre-written note to the teller ("Note-2"). Note-2 said, "Pass me A grand \$ or more, no less, or one of the employees [sic] will get hurt, on the other floor." A photo of Note-2, which law enforcement recovered from Branch-2 after responding to Robbery-1, is below:



Note-2

d. The teller took Note-2 from Robber-1 and shortly thereafter handed Robber-1 approximately \$1,000 in cash. Robber-1 then exited Branch-2.

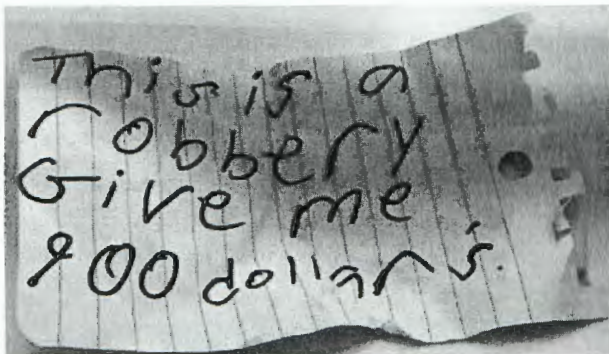
Identification of the Attempted Robber and Robber-1

The ALLEN Robbery Demand Notes

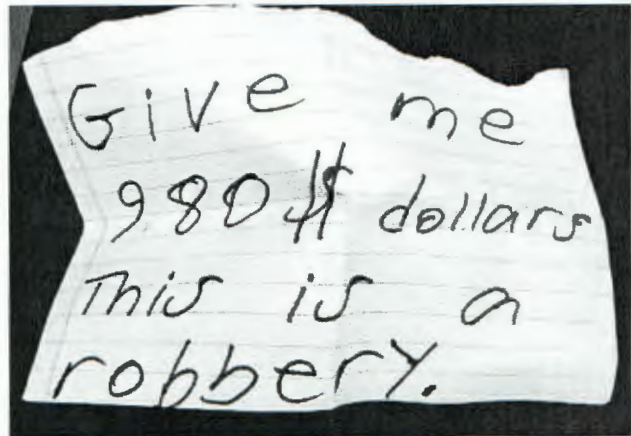
10. On or about January 4, 2023, I consulted a detective with the New York Police Department (the “Detective”) in connection with this investigation. In consulting the Detective, I informed him that I am a member of the Task Force. Without using the name ELLIOT ALLEN, the defendant, or mentioning the Robbery Pattern, I showed the Detective images of Note-1 (that is, the pre-written note that the Attempted Robber presented to the Branch-1 teller during the Attempted Robbery, *see supra* ¶ 8(c)-(d)) and Note-2 (that is, the pre-written note that Robber-1 presented to the Branch-2 teller during Robbery-1, *see supra* ¶ 9 (c)-(d)).

11. The Detective immediately recognized the distinctive handwriting on Note-1 and Note-2 – in particular, the overlapping lines in the letter “O” – as belonging to a person that the Detective had previously arrested for a series of prior bank robberies in the Bronx, New York (the “2021 Bank Robberies”). That person was ELLIOT ALLEN, the defendant. The Detective had arrested ALLEN on or about November 29, 2021, in the Southern District of New York, for robbery in the third degree arising out of the 2021 Bank Robberies (the “November 2021 Arrest”). In the course of his investigation, the Detective had reviewed notes that ALLEN had used in the 2021 Bank Robberies (“Note-3,” “Note-4,” and “Note-5”). On this basis, the Detective had become familiar with the distinctive features of ALLEN’s handwriting on ALLEN’s bank robbery notes.

12. Still images of the notes that ELLIOT ALLEN, the defendant, used in the 2021 Bank Robberies are depicted below:



Note-3



Note-4

This is a robbery. Give me 900 \$ dollars now, no games.

Note-5

13. On or about February 22, 2023, the Detective again arrested ELLIOT ALLEN, the defendant, this time for a bank robbery in Brooklyn, New York (the "February 2023 Arrest"). In the course of his investigation, the Detective recovered the note used by ALLEN ("Note-6") in connection with the bank robbery giving rise to the February 2023 Arrest (the "February 2023 Bank Robbery"). Note-6 is depicted below, and features the same distinctive handwriting that appears in Note-1, Note-2, Note-3, Note-4, and Note-5:

I see what you look like, I will go after you on the outside, but I rather avoid that. so give me 2500\$, no less than 2000 cash. Need to take care of children, taking home.

Note-6

14. On or about February 27, 2023, the NYPD Police Laboratory, Criminalistics Section, completed an analysis of Note-6, the February 2023 Bank Robbery, *see supra* ¶ 9 (the "NYPD Lab Report"). The NYPD Lab Report stated that Note-6 "was searched through the current Robbery Note Database of the Police Laboratory's Questioned Documents Unit," and that "[a]s of 02/27/2023 the following cases, including the current submission [*i.e.*, Note-6], can be associated to a common source." The NYPD Lab Report then identified fifteen "robbery demand

notes” that it “associated to a common source.” This list included all of the ALLEN Robbery Notes.

15. Based on my review of the ALLEN Robbery Notes, I have identified additional distinctive common features, including:

a. A distinctive lower-case letter “s” that is either unusually horizontal (*see, e.g.*, the “s” in “cash” in Note-6, *supra* ¶ 9), or appears unusually to consist of two separate pen strokes (*see, e.g.*, the “s” in “this is” in Note-5, *supra* ¶ 8(b)), or features both distinctive characteristics (*see, e.g.*, the unusually horizontal and double-stroked nature of both letters “s” in “no less” in Note-2, *supra* ¶ 7(c));

b. The distinctive repeated use of inappropriate possessive apostrophes for plural nouns (*i.e.*, “bill’s” in Note-1, *supra* ¶ 6(c), “900 dollar’s” in Note-3, *supra* ¶ 10 and “no game’s” in Note-5, *id.*); and

c. The consistent use of two vertical strikes in the dollar signs (*i.e.*, Note-1, *supra* ¶ 6(c), Note-2, *supra* ¶ 7(c), Note-4 and Note-5, *supra* ¶ 8(b), and Note-6, *supra* ¶ 9).

The Storage Facility Surveillance Footage

16. In the course of investigating the February 2023 Bank Robbery, the Detective became aware that ELLIOT ALLEN, the defendant, rented a storage unit at a self-storage facility located at 2301 Tillotson Avenue, Bronx, New York (the “Storage Facility”).

17. I have reviewed business records from the Storage Facility that confirm that ALLEN currently rents a storage unit at the Storage Facility (the “ALLEN Storage Unit”).

18. I understand, from communicating with the Detective and from reviewing business records from the Storage Facility, that the ALLEN Storage Unit is accessible by taking an elevator to the fourth floor of the Storage Facility.

19. I have reviewed surveillance footage from the Storage Facility that depicts a person I believe to be ELLIOT ALLEN, the defendant, on the fourth floor of the Storage Facility wearing the same clothes as Robber-1 several hours after Robbery-1.

20. The images on the next page depict Robber-1 inside of Branch-2 during Robbery-1, and ALLEN inside of the Storage Facility later the same day as Robbery-1:



Robber-1 enters Branch-2 at approximately 9:18 AM on December 28, 2022 (above). A person wearing the same outfit (including blue jeans with the hem rolled upward to appear as a light band), and believed to be ELLIOT ALLEN, the defendant, exits the fourth-floor elevator at the Storage Facility at approximately 4:00 PM on December 28, 2022 (below). ALLEN's rented storage unit, Unit 4503, is on the fourth floor of the Storage Facility.



Robbery-2

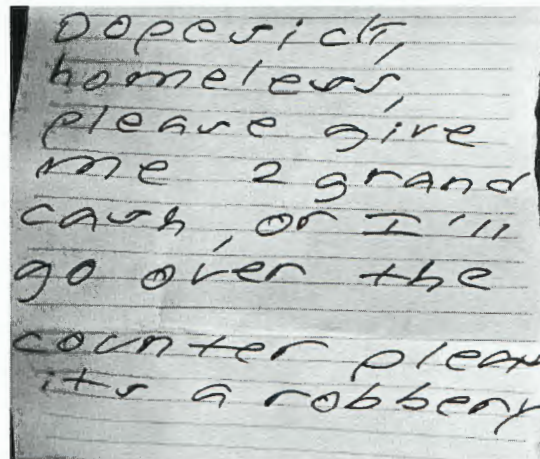
21. Based on my conversations with other law enforcement officers and my review of law enforcement reports, surveillance video, and photographs, I have learned the following about a robbery on or about May 4, 2023 (“Robbery-2”):

a. On or about May 4, 2023, at approximately 12:40 PM, a person (“Robber-2”) entered a bank (“Bank-3”) branch at 4020 Queens Boulevard in Queens (“Branch-3”) wearing a navy blue sweatshirt with a Fila logo on its chest, a light-colored medical facemask, blue jeans, and white or light-colored shoes.

b. Still images of Robber-2 entering Branch-3, and of Robber-2 approaching a teller at Branch-3, were captured from Branch-3’s surveillance cameras and are shown below:



c. When Robber-2 reached the teller’s window, Robber-2 passed a pre-written note to the teller (“Note-7”). Note-7 said, “Dopesick, homeless, please give me 2 grand cash, or I’ll go over the counter please its a robbery.” A photo of Note-7, which law enforcement recovered from Branch-3 after responding to Robbery-2, is below:



Dope sick,
homeless,
please give
me 2 grand
cash, or I'll
go over the
counter please
its a robbery

Note-7

d. Based on my review of the ALLEN Robbery Notes, described above in Paragraphs 10 through 15, I believe that Note-7 shares their characteristics, including the distinctive lower-case “s” described in more detail above in Paragraph 15(a).

e. A Bank-3 employee gave Robber-2 an amount of cash. A GPS or similar location tracking device was obscured within the cash (the “Branch-3 Tracking Device”).

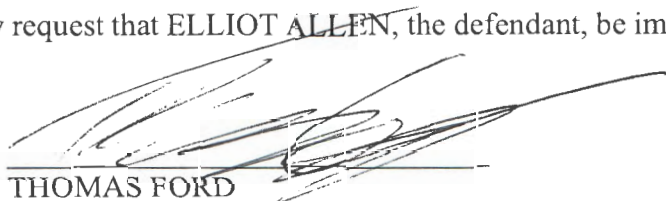
f. Law enforcement officers used the Branch-3 Tracking Device to identify the location of Robber-2.

g. At approximately 2:23 PM on or about May 4, 2023, law enforcement officers arrested an individual matching Robber-2’s description and in the vicinity of the Branch-3 Tracking Device in the Co-op City neighborhood of the Bronx. At or around the time of his arrest, this individual identified himself to law enforcement officers as ELLIOT ALLEN. Law enforcement officers also recovered from ALLEN the cash that had been given to him at Branch-3.

Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation

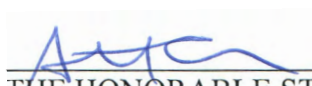
22. From my review of publicly available materials, as well as my training and experience as a Special Agent of the FBI and a member of the Task Force, I know that, at all relevant times, the deposits of Bank-1, Bank-2, and Bank-3 were insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

WHEREFORE, I respectfully request that ELLIOT ALLEN, the defendant, be imprisoned or bailed, as the case may be.



THOMAS FORD
Special Agent
Federal Bureau of Investigation

Sworn to me this 17 day of May, 2023.



THE HONORABLE STEWART D. AARON
United States Magistrate Judge
Southern District of New York